



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Martin County WMA Acquisition Phase 5
Laws of Minnesota 2021 Accomplishment Plan

General Information

Date: 07/13/2023

Project Title: Martin County WMA Acquisition Phase 5

Funds Recommended: \$2,864,000

Legislative Citation: ML 2021, First Sp. Session, Ch. 1, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd. 2(j)

Appropriation Language: \$2,864,000 the first year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire land in fee and restore and enhance strategic prairie grassland, wetland, and other wildlife habitat in Martin and Watonwan counties for wildlife management under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8, as follows: \$2,181,000 to Fox Lake Conservation League, Inc; \$592,000 to Ducks Unlimited; and \$91,000 to the Conservation Fund. A list of proposed acquisitions must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Doug Hartke

Title:

Organization: Fox Lake Conservation League, Inc.

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Location Information

County Location(s): Martin and Watonwan.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Prairie
- Habitat

Narrative**Abstract**

This program will continue our conservation partnership into Phase 5 and will continue to protect and restore diverse prairie and wetland habitat in areas that adjoin existing MN DNR WMAs. Parcels are identified with representatives of local government, Windom Area MN DNR, Ducks Unlimited (DU), The Conservation Fund (TCF), the Fox Lake Conservation League, Inc. (FLCL), and other local partners. Wetland restoration and additional grasslands are needed to make our WMA habitats resilient. We will use the real estate expertise of TCF, wetland and grassland restoration expertise of DU, and the local conservation efforts of FLCL to ensure success.

Design and Scope of Work

Selective project sites will be targeted for protection and restoration by the habitat needs and land availability in areas adjacent to existing WMAs, existing habitat and land already protected from development or other land use change. Work is designed to provide the most habitat value. The landscape will be restored as close as possible to conditions that existed prior to its conversion to agricultural production. Wetlands will be restored without the disruption of the natural drainage system. Native vegetation will be restored with a diverse range of species suitable to the landscape.

TCF will negotiate the acquisition and lead the real estate process for properties targeted in this proposal. FLCL will hold and monitor the properties during the restoration work, which will be completed by DU. The restored lands will then be conveyed to the MN DNR.

How does the plan address habitats that have significant value for wildlife species of greatest conservation need, and/or threatened or endangered species, and list targeted species?

This project will protect threatened habitats in Martin and SE Watonwan Counties. Native prairie and high quality wetlands will be protected, buffered and expanded upon. Restoration sites will provide the opportunity to expand populations of at-risk and threatened plant species that Martin SWCD has propagated and introduced into permanent protected sites. The FLCL is continuing the work Martin SWCD initiated, by selecting additional locally rare at-risk species for propagation and use on this and future habitat restoration projects to protect the local native seed source. While hundreds of Sullivant's milkweed (*Asclepia sullivantii*) and Tuberous Indian Plantain (*Cacalia tuberosa*) have been introduced into WMAs and other protected land, Small white lady's slipper (*Cypripedium candidum*) and Rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*) will continue to be propagated using local source plant material for use in this project. Parcels selected for this proposal expand habitat protection for the threatened Blanding's Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*) Perch Creek population that has been studied by the MN DNR and featured in the "MN Volunteer".

Describe how the plan uses science-based targeting that leverages or expands corridors and complexes, reduces fragmentation or protects areas identified in the MN County Biological Survey:

Our "Martin County Conservation Alliance" has grown into a planning group that includes wildlife group representatives, NGO's, local government, and state agencies. There is a wide range of knowledge and interest within the group. Historic information, the MN County Biologic Survey, and local knowledge help identify areas where habitat restoration will likely be most beneficial for multiple reasons. Expanding habitat adjacent to existing high quality native habitat and habitat already protected by public ownership or perpetual conservation easements are targeted. Sites with threatened, endangered and species in-decline are good targets to build upon, especially when these expansions can link sites to help extend corridors, expand blocks, and protect and enhance habitat buffers along water courses and lake chains. On our parcel list, we have the following tracts that have areas of biodiversity significance as identified by the MN County Biological Survey:

Perch Creek WMA has a high level of biodiversity significance. Perch Creek is also part of a Pheasant Habitat Complex.

Caron WMA has a moderate level of biodiversity significance and also has a Priority Shallow Lake as identified by MNDNR Wildlife. Caron WMA is also part of a Pheasant Habitat Complex.

Gruven WMA is home to a moderate amount of biodiversity significance.

Which two sections of the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan are most applicable to this project?

- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds
- H7 Keep water on the landscape

Which two other plans are addressed in this program?

- Long Range Duck Recovery Plan
- Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition - The Next 50 Years

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program?

Prairie

- Protect, enhance, or restore existing wetland/upland complexes, or convert agricultural lands to new wetland/upland habitat complexes

Outcomes

Programs in prairie region:

- Key core parcels are protected for fish, game and other wildlife ~ *By adding these important parcels to the Martin County and Watonwan County WMA complexes we are adding valuable grasslands to the WMAs of*

Southern Minnesota. This additional diverse upland habitat will provide much needed habitat for many wildlife species. This project will also add valuable acres for public hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities with all of the fish, game, and rare species that will be found on this new public land. The measurable habitat value will be based on the diversity of habitat protected and restored and the volume of public use these new acres receive.

Does this program include leveraged funding?

No

Per MS 97A.056, Subd. 24, Please explain whether the request is supplanting or is a substitution for any previous funding that was not from a legacy fund and was used for the same purpose.

This proposal does not supplant or substitute previous funding for the same purpose.

Non-OHF Appropriations

Year	Source	Amount
2014	LCCMR	\$400,000

How will you sustain and/or maintain this work after the Outdoor Heritage Funds are expended?

Maintaining partners and improving this work after our restoration plans are implemented will be the responsibility of the MN DNR with support from project partner ECP CPL grants if and when available to continue to assist the MN DNR. Also local groups within the "Martin County Conservation Alliance" will be there to assist the MN DNR with future dollars. Local partners will continue to install additional local source native plant species to enhance habitat to support more species, including pollinators. Local partner monitoring will assist in identifying invasive species threats and provide assistance with eradication or control when necessary.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Ongoing	Local	Monitor to add local species	Monitor for invasive species	Treat and Plant as needed
Ongoing	MN DNR Budget	Monitoring	Maintennance	Management

Activity Details

Requirements

If funded, this program will meet all applicable criteria set forth in MS 97A.056?

Yes

Will county board or other local government approval be formally sought prior to acquisition, per 97A.056 subd 13(j)?**

Yes

Is the land you plan to acquire (fee title) free of any other permanent protection?

Yes

Land Use

Will there be planting of any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program?

Yes

Explain what will be planted:

Temporary cropping may be used to prepare land for restoration and native food producing species will be planted to reduce reliance on food plots. If needed food plots will be used and managed by the MN DNR.

Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing?

No

Will the land be open for hunting and fishing after completion?

Yes

Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:

These acquisitions will be part of the MN DNR WMA's so all land will be open to the public.

Who will eventually own the fee title land?**Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:****What is the anticipated number of closed acquisitions (range is fine) you plan to accomplish with this appropriation?****Are there currently trails or roads on any of the proposed acquisitions?**

No

Will new trails or roads be developed or improved as a result of the OHF acquisition?

No

Will the acquired parcels be restored or enhanced within this appropriation?

-

Will the land that you acquire (fee or easement) be restored or enhanced within this program's funding and availability?

Yes

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Begin Acquisition Negotiation	October 2021
Acquire Parcel(s)	Fall 2021 - Fall 2023
Plan Restoration	Winter 2021
Transfer Parcel to MN DNR	2022
Complete Restoration	2023-2025
Follow-up/Maintenance/Weed Control	2023 and beyond

Date of Final Report Submission: 11/01/2025

Availability of Appropriation: Subd. 7. Availability of Appropriation

Money appropriated in this section may not be spent on activities unless they are directly related to and necessary for a specific appropriation and are specified in the accomplishment plan approved by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. Money appropriated in this section must not be spent on indirect costs or other institutional overhead charges that are not directly related to and necessary for a specific appropriation. For acquiring real

property, the amounts in this section are available until June 30, 2025. Money for restoration or enhancement is available until June 30, 2026. Money for restoration and enhancement of land acquired with an appropriation in this article is available for four years after the acquisition date with a maximum end date of June 30, 2029. If a project receives at least 15 percent of its funding from federal funds, the time of the appropriation may be extended to equal the availability of federal funding to a maximum of six years if the federal funding was confirmed and included in the original approved draft accomplishment plan. Money appropriated for acquiring land in fee title may be used to restore, enhance, and provide for public use of the land acquired with the appropriation. Public-use facilities must have a minimal impact on habitat in acquired lands.

Budget

Budget reallocations up to 10% do not require an amendment to the Accomplishment Plan.

Grand Totals Across All Partnerships

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$141,500	-	-	\$141,500
Contracts	\$494,000	-	-	\$494,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$2,075,000	-	-	\$2,075,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$11,000	-	-	\$11,000
Professional Services	\$59,500	-	-	\$59,500
Direct Support Services	\$12,000	-	-	\$12,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$30,000	-	-	\$30,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$1,000	-	-	\$1,000
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	\$40,000	-	-	\$40,000
Grand Total	\$2,864,000	-	-	\$2,864,000

Partner: Ducks Unlimited**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$90,000	-	-	\$90,000
Contracts	\$444,000	-	-	\$444,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$9,000	-	-	\$9,000
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$8,000	-	-	\$8,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$1,000	-	-	\$1,000
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	\$40,000	-	-	\$40,000
Grand Total	\$592,000	-	-	\$592,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Biologist	0.4	-	\$90,000	-	-	\$90,000

Partner: Fox Lake Conservation League, Inc.**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$25,000	-	-	\$25,000
Contracts	\$50,000	-	-	\$50,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$2,075,000	-	-	\$2,075,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$1,000	-	-	\$1,000
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$30,000	-	-	\$30,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$2,181,000	-	-	\$2,181,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Grant Administration	0.25	3.0	\$25,000	-	-	\$25,000

Partner: The Conservation Fund**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$26,500	-	-	\$26,500
Contracts	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$1,000	-	-	\$1,000
Professional Services	\$59,500	-	-	\$59,500
Direct Support Services	\$4,000	-	-	\$4,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$91,000	-	-	\$91,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
MN Real Estate Staff	0.25	3.0	\$26,500	-	-	\$26,500

Amount of Request: \$2,864,000**Amount of Leverage:** -**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 0.0%**DSS + Personnel:** \$153,500**As a % of the total request:** 5.36%**Easement Stewardship:** -**As a % of the Easement Acquisition:** -

How will this program accommodate the reduced appropriation recommendation from the original proposed requested amount?

we will reduce the parcels and acres purchased and restored.

Personnel

Has funding for these positions been requested in the past?

Yes

Please explain the overlap of past and future staffing and position levels previously received and how that is coordinated over multiple years?

Each grant has specific parcels that will be purchased and restored.

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?

Purchase of seed/forbs, Restoration of wetland and grasslands.

Fee Acquisition

What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?

2 parcels should be acquired with this grant.

Travel

Does the amount in the travel line include equipment/vehicle rental?

Yes

Explain the amount in the travel line outside of traditional travel costs of mileage, food, and lodging

travel will be only mileage costs.

I understand and agree that lodging, meals, and mileage must comply with the current MMB Commissioner Plan:

Yes

Direct Support Services

How did you determine which portions of the Direct Support Services of your shared support services is direct to this program?

Fox Lake Conservation will not add for Direct Support Services.

TCF -Our real estate support staff keeps hourly time sheets to track direct time spent on projects by grant source. We have used those past metrics to estimate the costs for this grant.

DU - Minnesota DNR grants staff previously reviewed and approved DU accounting methodology for Direct Support Services, which are calculated and included in DU staff costs. DU Direct Support Services constitute approximately 10% of DU overall staff costs on average among DU conservation staff billing categories. DU breaks out and invoices for Direct Support Service expenses approved by DNR for reimbursement separately from Personnel expenses. In accordance with 2 CFR 200, DU uses the direct allocation method of allocating costs to programs and final cost objectives. This process of allocating costs is accomplished through the use of hourly rates. The direct cost of activities, including direct support expenses, is included in these hourly rates. The rates are comprised of costs for salaries, benefits, office space, general insurance, support staff, office supplies, and other various direct expenses incurred at the regional offices and conservation department at the home office. All costs are assigned to conservation projects (net of applicable personnel and other costs that are non-conservation related.) Hourly charges represent the amount that DU charges conservation projects per hour for each staff member working on the project. These costs represent expenses that directly support the labor cost necessary for the development of a specific water/wetlands conservation project.

Other Equipment/Tools

Give examples of the types of Equipment and Tools that will be purchased?

only something specific for this project would be purchased.

Federal Funds

Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program?

No

Output Tables**Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	250	-	-	250
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	250	-	-	250

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	\$2,864,000	-	-	\$2,864,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	\$2,864,000	-	-	\$2,864,000

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	250	-	250
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	250	-	250

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$2,864,000	-	\$2,864,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	\$2,864,000	-	\$2,864,000

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	\$11,456	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-

Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$11,456	-

Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

Parcels

For restoration and enhancement programs ONLY: Managers may add, delete, and substitute projects on this parcel list based upon need, readiness, cost, opportunity, and/or urgency so long as the substitute parcel/project forwards the constitutional objectives of this program in the Project Scope table of this accomplishment plan. The final accomplishment plan report will include the final parcel list.

Parcel Information

Sign-up Criteria?

No

Explain the process used to identify, prioritize, and select the parcels on your list:

Fox Lake Conservation is a leader in public lands acquisitions in Martin County and is continually working with the MN DNR to best qualify parcels that need to be acquired to improve the state WMA holdings in Martin County.

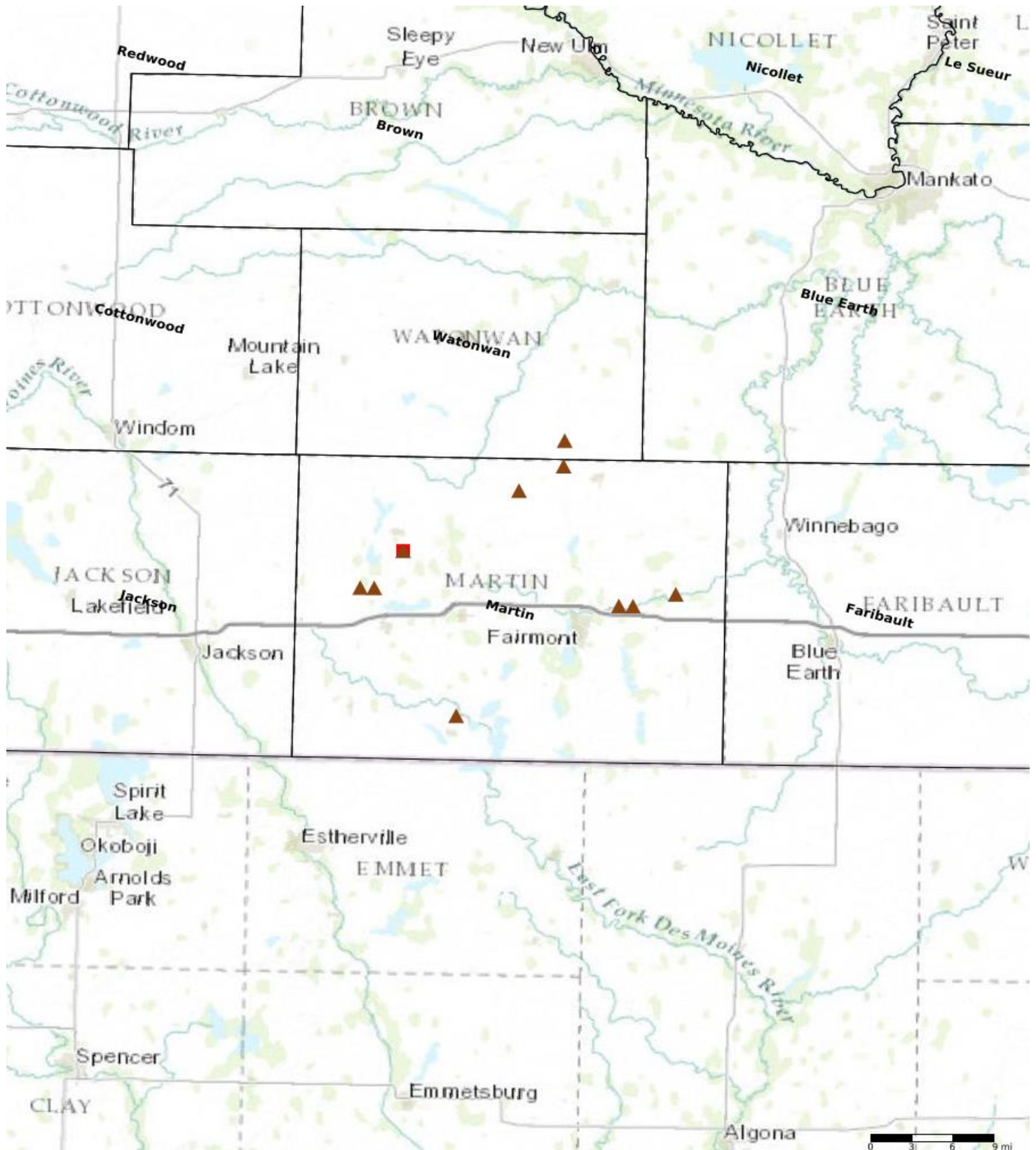
Protect Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Caron WMA Parcel 13A	Martin	10333225	135	\$1,050,000	No
Gruven WMA Tract #6	Martin	10330235	181	\$750,000	No
Center Creek WMA Tract #13	Martin	10329228	108	\$850,000	No
Perch Creek WMA Parcel 5A	Martin	10430206	190	\$1,950,000	No
Des Belt WMA Parcel 3	Martin	10132213	25	\$200,000	No
Gleam WMA Tract 3	Martin	10431215	35	\$450,000	No
East Fork WMA Parcel 2A	Martin	10332208	110	\$500,000	No
East Fork WMA Parcel 1A	Martin	10332208	120	\$800,000	No
Gruven WMA Parcel #6	Martin	10330236	181	\$750,000	No
Caron WMA Parcel 13B	Martin	10333226	209	\$1,600,000	No
Perch Creek Parcel 17	Watsonwan	10530230	150	\$1,250,000	No

Protect Parcels with Buildings

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Buildings	Value of Buildings
East Fork WMA Parcel 1B	Martin	10332208	10	\$75,000	No	3	\$0

Parcel Map



- Protect in Easement
- ▲ Protect in Fee with PILT
- Protect in Fee W/O PILT
- ★ Restore
- ✕ Enhance
- ⊕ Other